

State of California  
Department of Parks and Recreation

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

TO: Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Department of Parks and Recreation  
1416 Ninth Street  
P.O. Box 942896  
Sacramento, CA 94296-0001

**PROJECT TITLE:** Wastewater Collection/Treatment System Improvements

**LOCATION:** Big Basin Redwoods State Park

**COUNTY:** Santa Cruz

**DESCRIPTION OF THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PROJECT:**

DPR proposes to make the following improvements to the Wastewater Collection and Treatment System and Facilities at Big Basin Redwoods State Park to improve efficiency, protect public health, comply with local and state environmental health requirements, provide adequate administrative space, protect park resources, and support continued use and maintenance. The project will:

- Rehabilitate up to 50 manholes and approximately 10,000 linear feet of sewer line. Lines in Huckleberry and Wastahi Campgrounds and along North Escape Road will be lined via existing manholes with no excavation necessary; manholes will either be lined or replaced with minimum excavation.
- Replace 6" sewer line and suspension crossing at Opal Creek, working from banks and above stream. No work will occur in streambed.
- Replace the existing chlorine disinfection system with an ultraviolet or sodium hypochlorite system.
- Replace the emergency generator system and relocate just outside treatment plant gate; upgrade generator from 30 kW to 60 kW.
- Upgrade the existing trickling filter, plumbing, and electrical systems.
- Replace the existing 400-sq.-ft. modular building with an 800-sq.-ft. modular building on the same site, using existing utilities.

No excavation will occur within the structural root zone of scenic, mature trees (such as redwood and Douglas fir). No trees over 20" DBH (diameter at breast height) would be impacted or removed as a result of this project. No work will occur from March 24 through September 15 to avoid impacts during marbled murrelet nesting season. A spill prevention and response plan will be implemented, along with the use of accepted BMPs for control of soil erosion and runoff.

To avoid any potential impact to California red-legged frogs, a DPR-qualified resource ecologist will monitor all ground-disturbing activities within the boundary of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. If a California red-legged frog is found within a work area, work will be temporarily halted or diverted while a USFWS-approved biologist relocates the frog to suitable habitat outside the project area. A DPR-qualified resource ecologist will also instruct construction personnel in ways to recognize and protect California red-legged frogs or other sensitive natural resources prior to authorizing them to work in the proposed project area.

Due to the historic nature of the park, a DPR-qualified archaeologist will monitor all ground-disturbing activities. If potentially significant resources are unearthed, work in the immediate area of the find will be temporarily halted or diverted until identification and proper treatment are determined and implemented.

**PUBLIC AGENCY APPROVING THE PROJECT:** California Department of Parks and Recreation

**NAME OF DIVISION OR DISTRICT CARRYING OUT THE PROJECT:** Northern Service Center

**EXEMPT STATUS:**

☒ Categorical Exemption      Class: 1, 2, 3, 4      Section: 15301, 15302, 15303, 15304

**REASONS WHY PROJECT IS EXEMPT:**

Project consists of the repair, maintenance, and minor alteration of existing public structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, and topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond current levels (included as "utility repairs or minor upgrades" in the Department of Parks and Recreation's list of exempt activities, in accordance with CCR § 15300.4); replacement of an existing structure, on the same site as the structure replaced, with substantially the same purpose and capacity; construction and location of limited numbers of new, small facilities or structures, installation of small new equipment and facilities in small structures, or the conversion of existing small structures from one use to another where only minor modifications are made in the exterior of the structure; and minor alterations to the condition of land and vegetation that will not involve removal of healthy, mature, scenic trees.

**CONTACT:** Gail Sevens  
Northern Service Center

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**Kathleen Amann, Manager, Northern Service Center**

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